



GREATER WEST BLOOMFIELD CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

KEEGO HARBOR • ORCHARD LAKE • SYLVAN LAKE • WEST BLOOMFIELD

MINUTES

March 14, 2019

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Harvey Gersin, at 7:30PM at West Bloomfield Town Hall.

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Representing Keego Harbor: Michael Grogan
Representing Orchard Lake: Dan Krause
Representing Sylvan Lake: Matthew Benavides, Phil Ross
Representing West Bloomfield: Harvey Gersin, Mark Kowalsky, Suzanne Levine,
Deborah Macon, Jonathan Warshay

Members Absent:

Representing Keego Harbor: Ronnie Dahl
Representing Orchard Lake: Anne Dziuba
Representing West Bloomfield: Nada Jamoua

Others in Attendance:

Dave Scott (General Manager, Civic Center TV and WBLD), David Albery (Executive Director, GWBCCC)

The Executive Director stated that Mrs. Dziuba, Ms. Jamoua, and Ms. Dahl had communicated their inability to attend the meeting. He added that material in addition to that delivered earlier in the week had been provided for commissioners at the dais.

The Chairperson stated that history was made as the first ever Greater West Bloomfield "State of the Communities" was simulcast on Monday, March 11, on Civic Center TV and WBLD. He expressed appreciation to Mayors John Fletcher of Keego Harbor, Bruce McIntyre of Orchard Lake, and Aron Lorenz of Sylvan Lake, as well as West Bloomfield Township Supervisor Steve Kaplan, and added that the event provided an opportunity to learn more about each community. He invited all residents to view the event at civiccentertv.com or on You Tube.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Krause, support from Mr. Kowalsky:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the agenda as provided for the March 14, 2019 meeting.”

Voting YES: Benavides, Gersin, Grogan, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

4. Public Comment

The Chairperson stated that residents are provided an opportunity to address the Commission regarding cable-related issues at the beginning and the end of each meeting. Those unable to attend should contact the Commission at gwbcable.org.

No member of the public rose to address the Commission.

5. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Warshay, support from Ms. Levine:

“That the Minutes of the February 14, 2019 meeting, the February 26, 2019 Joint Meeting, and the March 5, 2019 Joint Meeting be approved as presented.”

Voting YES: Benavides, Gersin, Grogan, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

6. Acceptance of Financial Report

The report for the first two months of 2019 was summarized by Mr. Grogan, the Commission's Treasurer. The Executive Director presented the report of cable operator payments for the fourth quarter of 2018.

In response to a question from Mr. Kowalsky, the Chairperson noted that Sylvan Lake was the last of the four communities for which the AT&T percentage of gross revenue dropped from 2.82 percent to 2 percent.

Motion by Mr. Warshay, support from Ms. Levine:

“That the Financial Reports be accepted.”

Voting YES: Benavides, Gersin, Grogan, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay
Voting NO:

The motion carried.

7. Committee Reports

The Chairperson stated that this portion of the agenda provides an opportunity for committees to report to the Commission.

Report of the Finance Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was presented by Mr. Grogan, the committee chairperson.

Report of the Community Programming Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was summarized by Mrs. Macon, the committee vice-chairperson. She added that all committee meetings are public and that if a quorum of the Commission is present, the meeting becomes a Commission meeting.

Report of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was presented by Mr. Kowalsky the committee chairperson.

Motion by Mr. Warshay, support from Ms. Levine:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission accept the reports of the Finance, Community Programming, and Commission Operations and Strategic Planning committees.”

Voting YES: Benavides, Gersin, Grogan, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay
Voting NO:

The motion carried.

8. Executive Director's Report

Civic Center TV

Commissioners were provided a written report of 2019 Civic Center TV programming.

Mr. Scott addressed commissioners regarding the operation of Civic Center TV and WBLD, focusing on new staff at Green Media Center, viewership for the March 11 “State of the

Communities” event, and software updates for CCT.

Mrs. Macon commended Mr. Scott for his vision and Motown Digital’s contribution to the March 11 event, and other commissioners echoed her thoughts.

Mr. Ross stated that he viewed the event in California and that the quality was flawless, and Mr. Scott stated that his staff is using new and much more effective strategies for streaming content.

The Executive Director thanked West Bloomfield Schools for the use of facilities at Abbott Middle School and specifically Assistant Principal Lisa Graff for her assistance.

Mr. Warshay suggested thank you notes to all who helped out, and Mrs. Macon and Mr. Scott commended Brooke Allan for her on-air hosting.

Cable Operators

Commissioners were provided copies of a communication from Comcast regarding channel line-up changes.

GWBCCC Directory

Members were provided an updated directory of Commission membership, contractors, and committee assignments.

Cable Industry News

The CEO of Comcast has told investors that the video market will be tough going forward but that video is a profitable complement to the core product, broadband.

Rep. Eshoo (D-CA) and Sen. Markey (D-MA) have introduced the Truth-in-billing, Remedies, and User Empowerment over Fees Act, which would dictate that all cable charges be included in advertised prices, provide remedies for incorrect charges, and prohibit increases in the cost of equipment unless an improved version is provided.

A company has run a software simulation of the future of streaming and reports that with current offerings, 13 percent of cable subscribers will drop the service in the next 5 years, that the number doubles to 25 percent if live sports and other live programming are included, and that cable will lose between 2 and 14 percent of subscribers by 2024 depending on how streaming content is incorporated into cable offerings. The report also states that cable will be forced to lower prices, offer more customized packages, and provide more ease of use.

The top 11 pay TV operators lost just under 3 million subscribers in 2018, compared to 1.5 million in 2017. The biggest losers were satellite providers DirecTV and Dish Network. Comcast lost 371 thousand video subscribers in 2018, compared to 151 thousand a year earlier.

In response to a question from Mr. Kowalsky, the Executive Director stated that he has not come

across any information regarding whether cable cutters tend to be high-value or low-value cable subscribers.

Communication

No communication was received.

Commission Assistance to Residents

Two residents recently contacted the Commission with concerns regarding discrepancies between the rate that they had locked in with Comcast on a two-year agreement and amount they were being billed. The misunderstanding arose from the fact that taxes, fees, and equipment charges are not included in rate agreements, and Comcast made adjustments to bring the numbers close together.

Several residents have contacted the Commission regarding intermittent service issues which the operator has not been able to resolve. The advice provided always focuses first on the residential drop, the connection, whether underground or aerial, between the system and the home.

In response to a question from Mr. Kowalsky, the Executive Director stated that most intermittent service concerns focus on video service.

Mr. Warshay stated that 5G service may replace cable as all communication services come into the home via wireless service. Discussion focused on the future roles of 5G wireless and fiber broadband and controversy over possible health risks arising from 5G transmissions, which will be transmitted much lower to the ground than current cellular service.

In response to a question from Mr. Grogan, the Executive Director stated that Comcast's loss of 371 thousand video subscribers in 2018 is a very small percentage of its total subscriber base.

Mrs. Macon stated that the Commission will not only host the Clergy Association and Community Forum at Green Media Center on April but will also present the program at that meeting.

Preview

The Executive Director presented his agenda for the time period between this meeting and the next.

9. Unfinished Business

No items of Unfinished Business were presented.

10. New Business

No items of New Business were presented.

11. Public Comment

The Chairperson stated that residents are provided an opportunity to address the Commission regarding cable-related issues at the beginning and the end of each meeting.

No member of the public rose to address the Commission.

12. Commissioner Comments

Mr. Warshay stated that construction on the new roundabout at Maple and Middlebelt will begin in April, closing the intersection until sometime in the fall.

Mrs. Macon stated that she and the Executive Director presented information at the Michigan Association of Broadcasters Great Lakes Media Show in Lansing on March 6 and that material provided at that session had been distributed to commissioners.

She also mentioned a pop-up used book sale at the West Bloomfield Township Public Library on March 15 – 17 and the deadline for nominations for Hidden Treasures to be recognized at the Michigan Week Community Awards Breakfast on May 10.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairperson at 8:17PM.

The next meeting of the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission is **THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2019, at 7:30PM** at **WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWN HALL**, 4550 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield, Michigan.